

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, and 4-14 remain pending in this application for which applicants seek reconsideration.

Amendment

Independent claim 1 has been amended to improve its form and clarity, namely to ensure that the examiner correctly interprets the language "a stop time" as the period (i.e., length) of the time the hand is held at a stop position after the hand has been moved by a predetermined distance or more in the image pickup zone. No new matter has been introduced.

Art Rejection & Interview

Claims 1, 4-6, 8, and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Tamotsu (JP 11-134090) in view of Paul (USP 7,050,606). Claims 2, 7, 9, and 11-14 stand rejected under § 103(a) as unpatentable over Tamotsu and Paul in view of various combinations of Bogen (USP 5,815,147), Smith (USP 6,128,003), Pryor (USP 6,766,036), and Peter (USP 6,359,612).

Independent claim 1 presently calls for a hand pattern switch device that includes detection mode selecting means for selecting one of a plurality of prescribed detecting modes as a mode of detecting the operation information based on the hand motion in dependence with the controlled object selected by the controlled object selecting means. The prescribed detecting modes include 1) a moved distance detecting mode for detecting a moved distance of the hand in the image pickup zone, and 2) a stop time detecting mode for detecting a period of stop time of the hand held at a stop position after the hand has been moved by a predetermined distance or more in the image pickup zone.

One of the claimed features is detecting a period of stop time of a hand held at a stop position after the hand has been moved by a predetermined distance or more in the image pickup zone. Applicants submits that Paul (USP 7,050,606) would not have disclosed or taught this feature. In this respect, a telephonic interview with the examiner and the examiner's SPE was held on May 8, 2007. Again, applicants thank the examiners for granting an interview.

During the interview, Paul was discussed vis-a-vis the stop time feature, which is described on pages 24-25 ((iii) Time Mode) of the present specification. The stop time is not the time at which the hand stops moving, but rather how long the hand is held at the stop position after it has moved a predetermined distance or more in the image pickup zone. Paul only

detects whether a hand is in a stop position. Paul does not determine how long the hand is held at the stop position, let alone using the stop time as operation information for a controlled object.

During the interview, the examiners agreed that Paul would not have disclosed the stop time mode as set forth in claim 1. Moreover, the examiners had indicated that the present amendment will be entered and allowed if a more pertinent reference is not uncovered during an update search.

Applicants submit that claims 1, 2, and 4-14 patentably distinguish over the applied references, namely Tamotsu, Paul, Bogen, Smith, Pryor, and Peter, within the meaning of § 103, and are in condition for allowance. Should the examiner have any issues concerning this reply or any other outstanding issues remaining in this application, applicants urge the examiner to contact the undersigned to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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